

MDW STAFFING GUIDE

Prepared by:

Staff Action Control Office Office of the Commanding General Headquarters, US Army Military District of Washington Fort Lesley J. McNair, DC 29 March 2002

FOREWORD

"Knowledge is of two kinds. We know a subject ourselves, or we know where we can find information upon it." - Samuel Johnson

This guide has been developed to help you, the action officer, in preparing staff actions within the Headquarters, US Army Military District of Washington. It also provides a quick reference for all personnel involved in the staff action process and who are responsible for preparing and managing written communications for approval by a member of the command group.

The primary guidance on preparation and management of written correspondence and staff actions in the command is set forth in AR 25-50 and MDW Reg 25-50. This guide is to be used with these two publications. It explains the Commanding General's preferred policies, procedures, and guidance that, although based on the primary guidance, reflect the command way of getting things done.

Our Staff Action Control Office (SACO) is the proponent of this guide. If you need extra help, have any questions or tips to share, or have any suggestions for improving this guide; please contact any member of the SACO staff. They are more than willing to help you.

WILLIAM C. PUDDY Colonel. GS

Chief of Staff, MDW

Copies of the guide can be obtained from:

Staff Action Control Office, Headquarters, US Army Military District of Washington, 103 Third Avenue, Fort Lesley J. McNair, DC 20319, or phone (202) 685-2803 You may also access a copy on the MDW Intranet web site: https://intranet.mdw.army.mil

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PURPOSE

The purpose of this Staffing Guide is to assist action officers and administrative support personnel in the preparation of staff actions. It provides examples, references, and helpful guidance to assist in developing continuity of actions and references aimed at supporting the action officers and administrative support personnel in the process to assure successful coordination is complete and timely. It also prescribes specific administrative procedures for the US Army Military District of Washington (MDW) regarding preparation and management of written correspondence and staff actions in the command. Although primary guidance is set forth in AR 25-50, the Commanding General, MDW, has preferred policies, procedures, and guidance that, although based on the primary guidance, reflect the command way of getting things done.

ACTION OFFICER (OFFICE MANAGER) RESPONSIBILITIES

COMMANDERS, ACTIVITY HEADS, AND STAFF PRINCIPALS are responsible for the content, format, editing, and timely submission of all correspondence in their respective activities. They will ensure correspondence is prepared in accordance with AR 25-50, MDW Regulation 25-50, and this staffing guide; submit through the Staff Action Control Office (SACO) all correspondence to be signed, approved, or designated for a member of the command group; and will ensure the SACO is notified when a document has a short turn-around requirement so that it may be expedited through the command group. Additionally, they are responsible for:

- Writing the document requested/required.
- Reviewing the document after it is written.
- Assuring the package is prepared IAW AR 25-50, MDW Regulation 25-50, and this staffing guide.
- Proofreading your product for spelling, format, grammar, and content prior to submission.
- Assuring all documents are submitted through proper channels, as prescribed by this staffing guide.
- Alerting proper channels when documents have a short response time.
- Following through to assure your documents meet time restrictions.
- Assuring proper distribution has been completed.
- Proper preparation of briefing slides.
- Assuring NCOERs/OERs are prepared correctly and have been reviewed for spelling, grammar, format, and content prior to submission to reviewing or rating officials.
- Assuring NCOERs/OERs are submitted in a timely manner.
- Assuring that all submissions for award are made in a timely manner in order to allow sufficient time to process and obtain signature.

ADMINISTRATIVE/CLERICAL SUPPORT RESPONSIBILITIES

Administrative/clerical personnel have the responsibility of assuring the content, format, editing, and timely submission of all correspondence within their respective activities. They will assure correspondence is prepared in accordance with the AR 25-50, MDW Regulation 25-50, and this staffing guide; submit through the Staff Action Control Office (SACO) all correspondence to be signed, approved, or designated for a member of the command group; and will ensure the SACO is notified when a document has a short turn-around requirement so that it may be expedited through the command group. Additionally, they are responsible for:

- Reviewing the document to assure proper spelling, format, grammar, etc.
- Proofreading the document prior to submission.
- Assuring all documents are submitted through proper channels, as prescribed by this staffing guide.
- Following through to assure documents meet time restrictions.
- Assuring proper distribution is completed.
- Reviewing NCOERs/OERs for spelling, grammar, format, and content prior to submission to reviewing or rating officials.
- Assuring NCOERs/OERs are submitted in a timely manner.

STAFF ACTION CONTROL OFFICE (SACO) RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Staff Action Control Office (SACO) is the focal point for administrative assistance and action processing within MDW. The SACO is also responsible for managing the flow of correspondence to and through the command group and for tracking and accounting for all documents/correspondence sent to or created by the command group or staff principals within MDW. These include taskings, correspondence, or information documents from the MDW command group, Department of the Army, White House Liaison Office, MDW commanders/staff principals, or Congressional/Senatorial liaison offices.

2. The SACO is also responsible for:

- a. Editing and proofreading myriad documents received.
- b. Maintaining the CG, DCIS, CofS, ADCIS, SGS, and MDW staff principal reading files.
- c. Maintaining suspense files for documents returned to the originating office/agency for correction, OERs, and NCOERs.
- d. Dating, copying, and dispatching documents IAW AR 25-50, MDW Suppl 1 to AR 25-50, MDW PAM 25-50, and MDW PAM 25-32 as applicable.
- e. Cross-checking correspondence with delinquent/suspense reports to determine if correspondence responds to taskers and has met the suspense date.
 - f. Issuing a weekly delinquent suspense/tasker report.

3. The SACO does not:

- a. Make distribution for staff principals outside the command group. Distribution is the responsibility of the originating office/agency. In rare instances when the originating agency is remote (i.e., Fort A.P. Hill, Fort Hamilton), SACO will, after the originating office grants permission, make distribution in the interest of saving time.
- b. Retype lengthy documents needing correction. The SACO will "fix" documents that are no longer than three pages in length. NOTE: Corrections must be minimal and a readable diskette or electrons provided with the correspondence. Do not use headers or footers.
- **4.** For correct signature blocks to be used for memorandums and letters refer to MDW Reg 25-50.
- **5**. Use of the MDW distribution formula shown in MDW Pam 25-32 is strongly encouraged. Use of this formula avoids lengthy addressee lists. Do not use complete mailing addresses for distribution formulas.

- **6.** The originating agency/activity is responsible for the distribution/mailing of documents after signature or approval.
- 7. If a document can stand alone, i.e., no MDW Form 4-E and no enclosures or tabs are required (e.g., tasked executive summaries or information papers), it may be e-mailed to the SGS, but only by the principal/commander/agency head or deputy/XO as evidence of their approval and release of the document.
- **8.** When the commanding general directs a member of MDW to write a letter on his behalf, follow these procedures:
- a. The first paragraph will include a phrase or sentence such as "The Commanding General has requested that I respond on his behalf..." This performs the function of the authority line placed at the bottom of a memorandum. For example, the first paragraph might read:

"Thank you for your letter of October 28, 1993, addressed to Major General Smith regarding cross walks on Jones Avenue. After discussing this matter with me, Major General Smith requested that I respond to you on his behalf."

- b. Do not forward the letter for approval unless the subject matter is complex, has the potential to become highly controversial, or the commanding general has specifically requested a draft.
- c. Forward to SACO one signed and dated copy of all letters sent on behalf of the commanding general so the action can be closed out.
- **9.** All documents submitted to the command group for approval, signature, review, etc., must be submitted through the SACO. This requirement is nonnegotiable. Remember, your documents are routed through numerous command group principals before reaching the decision maker. In past instances, failure to submit documents through the SACO resulted in lost documents that in turn resulted in loss of timeliness and the originator having to "redo" the package. If you do not submit through the SACO, it has no tracking route, and there is no way SACO can trace its path through the system. All documents routed through the SACO are handled expeditiously and are diligently tracked.

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE GUIDANCE

- 1. The aim of correspondence is to make a personal, yet professional, contact in the simplest possible way, and the simplest way is to use familiar, everyday words. Language used in correspondence must be clear and direct in its approach and logical in its structure. It must adapt to specific circumstances and be free of complicated expressions or jargon. The DA Pam 600-75, Effective Writing for Army Leaders, sets the staff writing guidelines to achieve standards for effective writing.
- **2.** Correspondence must be reviewed for correct grammar, spelling, and format prior to forwarding for signature, approval, or review. Do not rely on spell-check alone; the wrong word can be spelled correctly but still be the incorrect word for the idea being expressed.
- **3.** Acronyms listed in the glossary of MDW Reg 25-50 may be used only in MDW internal correspondence without first spelling them out. In correspondence being sent out of MDW, acronyms will be spelled out when used the first time, and if used more than once, the acronyms will appear in parentheses immediately after the spelled out version. After the first use, the acronym may be used as appropriate, however, do not begin a sentence with an acronym. Do not use acronyms in letters.
- **4.** Correspondence for the signature of members of the command group will be submitted in final, single spaced format on appropriate stationery.
- **5.** Use MDW letterhead stationery for letters and memorandums to be signed by any member of the command group.
- **6.** Acceptable fonts are Times Roman 12 pitch or Times New Roman 12 pitch. Correspondence prepared for DA staff will be prepared in Arial 12 font.
- **7.** Margins should be 1 inch all around. Do not justify the right margin except in publications such as regulations, pamphlets, etc., and award certificates.
- **8.** The "Reply to Attention" line will always display the originating office symbol (memorandums, i.e., ANPE) or office title (letters, e.g., Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel). See AR 25-50 and MDW Reg 25-50 for additional examples.
- **9.** Do not date correspondence to be signed by a command group member. The SACO will date the document after it is signed.
- **10.** If the recipient of a letter signed by the commanding general holds the rank of **l**eutenant general (3-star) or above, the complimentary close to be used is "Very respectfully." Use "Sincerely" if the recipient holds the rank of major general (2-star) or below, or is a civilian.

Closings for individuals at the highest levels of government will differ. Consult AR 25-50 or SACO if in doubt. On personal notes, however, use "Very respectfully" for both military and civilian addressees senior in rank to the commanding general.

COMMAND CORRESPONDENCE POLICY

- **1.** Reference policy memorandum, 20 October 2000, Subject: Command Correspondence Policy.
- **2.** The above referenced memorandum authorizes staff principals to correspond directly with subordinate installations, activities, and units providing technical guidance or information. Correspondence directed to such subordinate installations, activities, and units will be addressed to the appropriate community, unit, or activity commander with "ATTN" to the appropriate staff element. This correspondence will <u>not</u> be signed "FOR THE COMMANDER."
- **3.** Staff principals are authorized to correspond directly with subordinate installations, activities, and units within their functional area or responsibility transmitting policy, taskings, and requesting information. This correspondence will be addressed to the appropriate community, unit, or activity commander, and will be signed 'FOR THE COMMANDER." Staff correspondence falling into this category will be consistent with existing command policy in the subject area. If there is a question regarding policy, the matter will be referred to the command group for guidance.
- **4.** Correspondence to agencies outside the command, which conveys a command position normally, will be signed by a member of the command group. The staff may be authorized to sign such correspondence "FOR THE COMMANDER" after obtaining command group approval.

PREPARATION OF TWO-STAR CORRESPONDENCE

- **1.** Adjust margins, depending on length of note, to achieve a "picture frame" effect.
- **2.** Do not use abbreviations or acronyms except as authorized in AR 25-50, paragraphs 4-5, 4-8a(4) (a), and 4-8c(2) (b).
- **3.** Type the return address one line under the flagstaff, beginning at the center of the page. Type the complete as follows:

Headquarters US Army Military District of Washington 103 Third Avenue Fort Lesley J. McNair, DC 20319-5058

- **4.** Insert a minimum of two lines between the mailing address and the salutation. Space down two lines and indent four spaces; begin typing on the fifth space.
- **5.** Do not number paragraphs.
- **6.** If more than one page is required, place the page number at the top center of the page at the sixth line with a hyphen on the right and left side of the number (i.e., -2-).
- 7. Start the complimentary close at center page, two lines below the last line of the note.
- **8.** Begin the signature block on the fifth line below the complimentary close.

CORRESPONDENCE FOR ARMY SENIOR LEADERS

- **1.** All HQDA staff actions forwarded to the Secretary of the Army (SA), Chief of Staff, Army (CSA), Vice Chief of Staff, Army (VCSA), Director of the Army Staff (DAS), or other HQDA staff principals will be prepared in accordance with DA Memo 25-52 and AR 25-50.
- **2.** Writing Style. Style procedures for correspondence to the SA, CSA, VCSA, or DAS are outlined in DA Memo 25-52, paragraph 5b (1)-(11).
- **3.** General guidance is listed below for correspondence for Army senior leaders.
 - a. Use Arial 12 font.
- b. Avoid abbreviations except for those generally accepted, i.e., p.m., or Inc. Acronym should always be spelled out the first time, and then placed in parentheses if used again.
- c. Do not carry abbreviations such as Jr., Inc., to the next line. Adjust spacing to accommodate or move the name to the next line.
- d. Requirements for dating correspondence are outlined in DA Memo 25-52, paragraph 6, page 15. Do not split dates.
- e. Hyphenation is acceptable but do not hyphenate the first line of a paragraph or the next to last line. Always make sure words are properly hyphenated and are not hyphenated two lines in a row. Never hyphenate proper nouns.
- f. Use attachments only when absolutely essential. Specifying enclosures in the text is preferred over listing them in an enclosure block.
 - g. Keep length to one page if possible but not more than two.

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS OF HEADQUARTERS, DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (101 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0101)

THE CHIEF OF STAFF, ARMY (200 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0200)

UNDER SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (102 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0102)

VICE CHIEF OF STAFF, ARMY (201 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0201)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (CIVIL WORKS) (108 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0108)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT) (109 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0109)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS) (111 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0111)

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (ACQUISITION, LOGISTICS AND TECHNOLOGY)
(103 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0103)

GENERAL COUNCIL (104 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0104)

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (105 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0105)

DIRECTOR OF THE ARMY STAFF (202 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0202)

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS FOR COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATIONS, AND COMPUTERS (107 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0107)

THE INSPECTOR GENERAL (1700 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-1700)

- THE AUDITOR GENERAL (PARK CENTER BUILDING 1, 3101 PARK CENTER DRIVE, ALEXANDRIA, VA 22301)
- CHIEF OF LEGISLATIVE LIAISON (1600 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-1600)
- CHIEF OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS (1500 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-1500)
- DIRECTOR, SMALL AND DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS UTILIZATION (106 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0106)
- CHAIRMAN, ARMY RESERVE FORCES POLICY COMMITTEE (2400 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-2400)
- DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR INTELLIGENCE (1000 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-1000)
- DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR LOGISTICS (500 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0500)
- DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF FOR OPERATIONS AND PLANS (400 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0400)
- CHIEF OF ENGINEERS (441 G STREET, 3RD FLOOR, WASHINGTON, DC 23014-1000)
- THE SURGEON GENERAL (800 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0800)
- CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU (2500 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-2500)
- CHIEF, ARMY RESERVE (2400 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-2400)
- THE JUDGE ADVOCATE GENERAL (2200 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-2200)
- CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS (2700 ARMY PENTAGON, WASHINGTON, DC 20310-2700)

PREPARATION OF MDW FORM 4-E (MDW SUMMARY SHEET)

The purpose of the MDW FORM 4-E is to provide a clear, concise, brief statement of issues and analysis of alternatives to the command group principal.

Blocks 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10: Self-explanatory.

Block 4: Sign and date. The director/commander or deputy XO must release actions for the command group.

Block 5: Leave blank.

Block 11: Do not use office symbols; use short-name office title (e.g., DCSPER; Safety; GC, Ft Belvoir, etc.).

Block 12:

- 1. PURPOSE: Begin with a clear, brief statement of the purpose of the action, e.g., "To respond to Mr. L. Biggo's request for assistance regarding . . ." <u>Do not request signature or approval.</u>
- 2. BACKGROUND: Include only if needed. Write simply. Do not assume decision-maker is familiar with the issue.
- 3. DISCUSSION: Provide a succinct statement of issues and analysis of alternatives. Build a case for the recommendation. For lengthy or complex issues, include a paragraph that summarizes conclusions. Make sure all references are identified and extracts are highlighted and attached at the appropriate tab(s). Identify each tab and summarize its purpose or key information, e.g., "At Tab S is extract of AR 00-0, title of AR, which grants signature authority to MACOM commanders." "Response to Mr. Biggo at Tab X approves his request to . . ." Ensure action has been fully coordinated prior to submission; mention nonconcurrences or comments and attach at appropriate tab(s).
- 4. RECOMMENDATION: Clearly state what you want the decision-maker to do, e.g., sign a document, approve an action, or simply note an issue. If multiple recommendations are required, clarify with a subparagraph: e.g., That the CG:
 - a. Approve agenda at Tab R.
- b. Sign memorandums a Tabs X1-X3. (If multiple signatures are required, place documents a separate tabs.)

If approval is required, add:			
APPROVED	DISAPPROVED	SEE ME	
(The command group principal will enter signature and date in the appropriate block.)			

Block 13: COORDINATION/APPROVAL

Ensure the document is fully coordinated before sending to command group.

Enter office symbol in first column.

Enter name of official/date/concurrence, nonconcurrence, or concur with comment in column 2. Enter Tab letter/number in column 3.

If the entry in column 2 is concur with comment, place comment at separate tab(s).

If the entry in column 2 is nonconcurrence and all efforts to reconcile the differences are negative, place a "Consideration of Nonconcurrence" and the nonconcurrence at separate tabs. (Tab F - consideration of nonconcurrence, Tab F1 - original nonconcurrence.)

TABBING

- 1. All correspondence/documents requiring the signature/ approval, initials, or line through of a command group principal are placed under Tab X. When more than one document is to be signed, place each under a sequential Tab X (i.e., Tab X, Tab X1, Tab X2, etc.) except when documents are fundamentally all alike except for the addressee, these may be placed under one tab.
- **2.** The Tab X will be visually separated from the rest of the action's tabs by spacing the first of the consecutive alpha tabs further down that tabbed page.
- **3.** The first alpha tab should be the original incoming correspondence and/or CG/CofS/DCIS guidance or question(s) that originally generated the action. If there is a SACO tasker, it will be the first item under that tab, followed by the original correspondence.
- **4.** The next tab will be documents submitted for approval that do not require a command group signature.
- **5.** At subsequent tabs will be other supporting documents (one per tab), each of which must be specified on the MDW Form 4-E along with its purpose (e.g., an extract of an AR authorizing the CG to approve/disapprove this action, with the applicable paragraphs highlighted to focus his attention quickly without having to search the entire page.
- **6.** In actions forwarded for approval only, not for signature, the item to be approved will be at the first tab of the consecutive alpha tabs, followed by the tab for the originating document(s) and tabs for supporting document(s).

USE OF OFFICE SYMBOLS AND OFFICE TITLES ON CORRESPONDENCE

The originating office will place its own office symbol (i.e., DCSRM, ANRM; ANC, ANNC; DCSPER, ANPE, etc.) on all memorandums and the office title (i.e., Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Resource Management) on all letters, regardless of who signs the document.

FONT REQUIREMENTS

Font requirements for MDW correspondence: Times Roman 12 or Times New Roman 12.

Font requirements for DA staff principals: Arial 12.

TASKERS

- 1. The Staff Action Control Office (SACO) will task suspense items to the proper action agency in order to assure that actions are returned through SACO for proper accountability and control, unless otherwise directed.
- **2**. Unless the document or the CG, DCIS, CofS, SGS, or CSM specifies otherwise, a 2-week suspense will be assigned.
- **3.** Suspense actions will remain open on the SACO suspense roster until the action has been completed, signed/approved, and returned to SACO to log out.
- **4.** The SACO will notify the action agency of a suspense action(s) telephonically or via e-mail.
- **5.** Taskers issued during meetings with command group principals begin immediately, not when they are placed into the MDW suspense database. It is understood that the person representing the staff principal received the requirement and will take appropriate action.
- **6.** Taskers directing an action officer or principal to meet with the CG should be worked immediately upon receipt. The action officer will contact the CG's Aide-de-Camp or secretary to arrange an appointment on the CG's calendar, referencing the tasker. If an appointment is not available until after the due date of the tasker, the appointment date becomes the suspense date. The suspense is not cleared until after the meeting occurs.
- 7. Agencies will exert every effort to meet all suspenses. If the suspense date cannot be met, the division chief/action officer will request an extension from the CofS not later than 3 working days prior to the suspense date. A request can be made via telephone, e-mail, or in writing. Division chiefs/action officers should be able to explain the pertinent history of the action and why the request is necessary. As soon as the extension is granted, division chiefs/action officers will provide SACO the log control number and new suspense date.
- **8**. If an action agency receives a direct tasking from a non-MDW entity which has neither come to the headquarters first nor been logged and tasked by SACO, a determination must be made immediately as to the signature block to be used for the reply. If the reply is to be signed by either the CG, DCIS, or CofS, the tasker must be brought to SACO for immediate entry into the MDW database. The suspense date to the command group will be 3 days prior to the date due to the tasking agency; both dates will be entered into the database. If either date must be extended, the request will be made to the CofS as stated in paragraph 7 above.

APPENDIX A REFERENCES

REQUIRED PUBLICATIONS:

AR 1-20 Army Congressional Special Interest Correspondence Program,

Legislative Liaison

AR 25-1 The Army Information Management

AR 25-50 Preparing and Managing Correspondence

AR 25-51 Official Mail and Distribution Management

AR 310-50 Authorized Abbreviations, Brevity Codes, and Acronyms

DA Memo 25-52 Staff Action Processes and Correspondence Policies

DA Pam 600-75 Effective Writing for Army Leaders

MDW Suppl to AR 1-20 Army Congressional and Special Interest Correspondence Program

and Legislative Liaison

MDW Reg 25-50 Information Management: Records Management, Preparing and

Processing Correspondence

MDW Pam 25-32 Information Management: Publishing and Printing, Preparing and

Issuing Administrative Publications

RELATED PUBLICATIONS:

United States Government Printing Office Style Manual 2000

Webster's II New Riverside University, 1994 Edition

PUBLICATION AND FORMS WEBSITES:

URL: http://www.USAPA.army.mil

URL: https:///www.mdw.army.mil/epubs.htm.